A SEMI-CENTENNIAL

HISTORICAL SKETCH

OF THE

GRANDE LIGNE MISSION

READ AT THE

JUBILEE GATHERING,

Grande-Ligne, P.Q., Canada, Oct. 18th, 1885,

BY

REV. THEODORE LAFLEUR.

MONTREAL:

PRINTED BY D. BENTLEY & CO.

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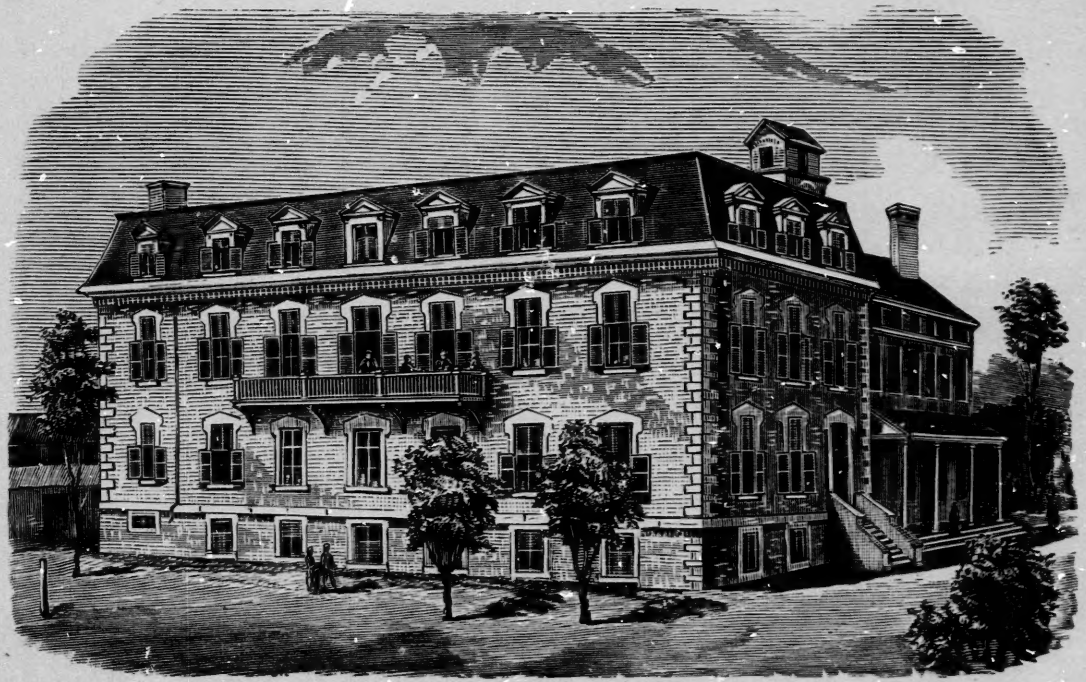
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FELLER INSTITUTE AND MISSION HOUSE, GRANDE LIGNE, P.Q.

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A Semi-Centennial Historical Sketch

OF THE

GRANDE LIGNE MISSION.

For the last fifty years the progress of science has been so great, it has given such a power to man over nature, that the latter may be said to have become the servant of man. The discovery of the application of steam-power has revolutionized the world of travellers and laborers, it has narrowed the seas, it has shrunk the continents, and has brought much nearer together the whole family of man. Electricity which for ages seemed to exist only to frighten human kind by its lightning and thunder, has become the docile, luminous, and still mysterious servant of man, the rapid vehicle of his thoughts across continents and oceans, and of his words from city to city. Some of the bolder sons of men even prophesy that ere long it will be the universal agent to warm and illumine our dwellings as it already gives a glaring light in some of our public places of resort, and become the motor of all our industries. Thus nature has become more and more the servant of man, because man has more and more submitted himself to the study of the ways of nature; and there is just here a very remarkable fact, that though much of the science of our day is attributed to men

who seem to ignore God, and his great revelation in Jesus Christ, still those great discoveries have been made by men who have been brought up in nations where the idea of a personal God is paramount, and where christianity has moulded most minds. The God of nature and of man has also during those wonderful years of development manifested his power in a higher sphere. The Father of our spirits has also mysterious but sure means of communications with his children on this earth of ours, with this imperfect and fallible family which he infallibly leads to its immortal destiny.

Toward the end of the first quarter of our century, following disastrous wars in Europe there was an awakening of souls to religious concerns such as had not been known for ages. This work of conversion inspired such zeal that Christians ardently wished not only to regenerate christendom, but also to carry the gospel to heathen lands, to idolatrous nations some of which seemed only emerging from animalism.

Leaving Great Britain aside, for she had had a great religious revival in the time of the Wesleys, this revival appeared in Europe after a century of shallow, dry, and worldly infidelity in France, while Switzerland had a formal, indifferent and partially rationalistic church, and when Germany was still under the blighting influence of a destructive philosophy, viz: pantheism. A missionary spirit sprung up in the bosom of Protestant and even Roman Catholic Christianity. A few pioneers like Carey preceded their brethren on foreign missionary fields, and were soon followed by the Marshman, Boardman, Judson, Moffat,

Lacroix, Cazalis, the Moravian brethren with renewed zeal, and a score of others.

To spiritualized protestant christians, deeply acquainted and imbued with evangelical truths, the dark, ignorant, and superstitious portions of Roman Catholic Christianity presented itself as a field of evangelization with almost as much need as paganism itself. Hence the great efforts put forth by the Evangelical Societies of Geneva and of France, in that direction, aided by large contributions from England.

We owe our first French Missionaries among the Roman Catholics of Canada to that mighty revival wave. After their conversion from formal Protestantism to the spiritual reality of the gospel, Madame Feller and Mr. Roussy were quite ready to devote themselves to a missionary field, but they had not yet decided where they would go, when Mr. Henri Olivier, pastor of a french church in Lausanne, made up his mind to come to Canada as a missionary to the Indians. Having arrived in Montreal in the autumn of 1834, he soon after decided to devote his time and all his powers to the evangelization of French Roman Catholics, whose language he spoke from infancy, rather than prepare himself, at his age, for the evangelization of Indians, whose different dialects he would have to learn. In consequence of a correspondence between Mrs. and Mr. Olivier, Madame Feller, and Mr. Roussy, the latter made up their minds to come and join them on this missionary field. They arrived on the 31st of October, 1835, a Saturday, at St. Johns, a few miles from Grande-Ligne. It was the worst time of the year for the weather, the roads,

and the aspect of the country. There were no railroads then, and scarcely any roads at all worth the name. They had left a country of surpassing beauty, and remarkable above all for the perfection of its highways. They did not come to evangelize the Indians, as the Recollet brothers, the Jesuits, and some of the English Missionaries did. They had not come to run over the wild country, to discover lakes, rivers, and mountains, like fathers Lallemand or Marquette, or suffer the tortures inflicted by Indians on a frère Jogue; they had not in view any traffic in precious skins, they had no intention to increase the power of any nationality, the territory of any dynasty or political power whatever, or to ever dabble in politics however secretly; their mission was of a higher and more spiritual nature. They had come for the sole purpose of making the gospel known in the midst of a corrupted christianity, among a people generally illiterate, and where the religion of the gospel had been buried under a mass of old and new superstitions. The priesthood made generally wealthy and independent by the system of tithes, haughty and overbearing by their system of clerical authority, had indeed imparted some instruction in their colleges and seminaries; the nuns in their convents, had to some extent done the same; but it was to the few, and especially to those who would some day be the instruments of their power over the people. The latter were left by them, not only in deep ignorance of gospel truth, for that is a consequence of the general teaching of romanism, but also of the simple elements of instruction, such as reading and writing, so that fifty years

ago, after more than a century of established parishes by the clergy, not more than ten persons in a hundred could read and write.

During a year's labor Monsieur and Madame Olivier had succeeded in bringing only three French Canadians to the gospel in a city of thirty thousand inhabitants. It was not a very encouraging result for those who had just come filled with the desire of accomplishing a great work. As far as this place was concerned, it was even less encouraging for years to come, as no other conversion from romanism took place for several years in that large and progressive city.

The climate of this country proving too severe for Mons. Olivier's constitution, the physicians advised him to return to Switzerland, which he did, consoling himself rather poetically with the reflection that he had at least been the bell to call other laborers into the field. It had not sounded in vain, that wonderful bell of a human personality, whom the divine spirit had set in vibration, and its peal of departure was not as some leaders in black gowns might think, the funeral knell of a new born infant, for those who were ready to nurse him, to lead his first steps, to interest him and to inspire him, were already there, decided to work and to give him numerous brethren in the faith. It was not in vain, dear and good Olivier, man of heart and devotedness that you came in this foreign land to pray, to work for a few days with sadness at the thought of not being able to do more, and to call other workers to help you, and finally to replace you. You were the bell announcing the birth of a new enterprise destined to

grow through difficulties and struggles, and that in spite of an opposition which has at its disposal immense resources, and is kept up by an activity which never sleeps.

After the departure of her friends the Oliviers, Madame Feller continued for some time in the city the work she had pursued with Madame Olivier, namely, teaching a few children the alphabet and visiting from house to house Roman Catholic families, to read the gospel to them, the truths of which were veiled by the teaching of the priest as much as by the ignorance of the people. That work did not last more than a few months, for the priests and the nuns succeeded in closing all doors against her efforts. In the meantime Madame Feller had become acquainted with the people, with their character, their ways, their religious ideas, and thus had prepared herself for the larger work she would have some day to do. The material was not ready in this place but the instrument was for some other place. Montreal was virtually closed to the gospel; it was only a good deal later that her doors would be opened with some measure of success.

Monsieur Roussy remained but ten days in Montreal and then left for Grande-Ligne to take charge of a primary school entirely Roman Catholic. After his school hours he would devote his time to making the gospel known around him. The parish priest having heard of this had the school closed by his sole authority, none of the parties interested having the courage to make any opposition to retain a school teacher superior to any one they had known before. Mr. Roussy had kept that school only about two months. During that time



LOG HUT IN WHICH MADAME FELLER COMMENCED HER WORK AT GRANDE LIGNE, 1835.

he had been able to visit a number of families, and in one of them had found a person all prepared to receive the truth in a saving manner, through Jesus Christ alone. She knew something of the gospel, having had a bible in her youth while living in the neighborhood of Boston, a book she always kept as a precious treasure, though nominally a catholic.

Madame Lore having received the message of the gospel with deep gratitude and exulting joy, became the means of bringing her whole family, which was a large one, to accept it also, and it was in the house of one of her daughters, Madame Lévêque, in the Grande-Ligne settlement, that Mr. Roussy began to preach the gospel, and in the same house that Madame Feller began her great work with very small means. It is that poor house, roughly built with logs, as they constructed houses in the country then, with no architectural merit but that of having lasted till now, that has been the cradle of this work of the Grande-Ligne, which has already a name in a large portion of the world, and a reputation that cannot but grow, and deserve, we trust, more and more its providential name, of *great line* marked by the finger of God for the work of his servants. It was that house, already inhabited by a family, which became for a time the abode, the school-room, the upper room of that mighty worker, and the radiating centre of her great soul.

It was here the missionary work fairly began. The Oliviers and Madame Feller had tried to commence in Montreal, Mr. Roussy and Madame Feller attempted in vain to initiate it in St. Johns; in the city and in the large village

LOG HUT IN WHICH MADAME FELLER COMMENCED HER WORK AT GRANDE LIGNE, 1835.

there were too many vigilant guardians, priests and nuns to allow such a work to be established. All that the missionaries could do was to bury in St. Johns the mortal remains of their first convert in the small Protestant burying ground, in the sure hope of a glorious immortality.

In spite of appearances, this is as providential as the most striking results in missionary labors. When circumstances and men are opposed to the gospel being preached in a certain place it is at times as sure an indication that it is the will of God that one should not obstinately work there, as it was that Paul should not persist in going to preach in Asia when forbidden by the Spirit to go there. Jesus had told his disciples that when not received in a city they should go into another. The time had not arrived for those cities, it might never come. It is properly here that the history of the Grande-Ligne Mission begins; a narrative of arduous work, of difficulties and privations, of suffering not so much of the body as of the soul, yearning in anguish at times for want of means to keep up the work already begun, and still more to extend it further, as it was the great desire of the inmost soul of the missionaries. Pushed by circumstances, our two missionaries came to unite their efforts in the same place. It was just one year after their arrival in Canada, a year in which they spent some time in feeling their way in the dark, praying incessantly for light and direction. They at last had found their standing point and field of action. They established themselves in this place, rather poor, of cheerless, aspect, where the farms were cleared only near the road, in

the midst of a people generally poor, the missionaries being poor themselves, but rich in faith, in courage, and it may be said, in holy illusions.

At the outset the missionaries believed with all their heart that the French Canadians were as a people very religious, doubtless because they appeared so, and when not hindered by their priests, would listen with rapture to the truth unfolded to them by those strangers. The missionaries believed that if once they could persuade every head of a family to have the gospel in their homes, all, or almost all, would heartily accept the divine message. They did not yet know that a great many who seemed to attend mass very devoutly, were very far from being religious and exemplary in their life. How different from the beautifully cultivated country which they had left to come here! There with the general protestant education is found general protestant morality, and almost universal veracity in all the walks of life. In a physical point of view they could from time to time contemplate a faint resemblance to their fatherland by ascending the little elevation on which the new church now stands, and from which one sees on the other side of the blue line of the Richelieu river the magnificent panorama of the Eastern Townships and Green Mountains of the State of Vermont. I fancy that many a time their hearts must have swelled as they cast their eyes eastward. But I know they were chiefly pre-occupied with thoughts of the heavenly home, and desirous above all to be able to say before the Heavenly Father in the great day: "Here we are with the children

which thou hast given us." It was that holy pre-occupation which sustained their prodigious courage in the painful days of their beginnings. A worthy Baptist Minister, pastor in Montreal came to visit the missionaries at Grande-Ligne, and being deeply affected by the inconveniences and privations endured by Madame Feller, undertook to provide some more suitable accommodations. He solicited contributions with which a temporary building was put up to meet the most pressing wants as a dwelling, a school, and a house of worship.

We are now in the year 1837, when a small church of sixteen members, converts from romanism, was organized, and when several of the inhabitants of the neighborhood had become favorable to them. Unfortunately this beginning of success was abruptly interrupted. In the month of October the rebellion broke out. The Patriots identifying the missionaries with english protestants began against them a series of persecutions which obliged them to seek refuge on the other side of the line, on American territory. On the 4th of November the missionaries and their adherents went to Champlain village where they spent a sad autumn. After two months stay they returned home to find their crops destroyed, their cattle stolen and their homesteads denuded of everything, except the bare walls. This was in the beginning of a long winter, when everything must be provided for, food for the moment, cattle and horses for farm work, and seed for the spring. The Lord through kind friends provided all that was necessary and the little band was formed again. The second phase of the rebellion left them comparatively

quiet. This short sojourn of the missionaries on the territory of the United States, where they met a great number of French Canadians, only extended the missionary area of Mr. Roussy's labors, which were rewarded with several conversions, and created an amount of travelling and labor much beyond his capacity to perform.

In this year 1838 several friends of the mission resolved to seek the necessary funds to build a permanent edifice suitable to accommodate a good number of pupils especially of those who wish to prepare themselves for missionary work and also for a place of worship. The foundations were laid in the autumn of 1838, with more faith than money. Mr. Roussy, who understood house building pretty well, superintended the work, and in the summer of 1840 the house was dedicated to the service of God with tears of gratitude on the part of the missionaries at least. With the opening of this house, a new era was also opened for this missionary enterprise. A great number of the friends of the mission came to join the missionaries in their rejoicings, from St. Johns, from Montreal, from Albany, from Boston, from New York, and elsewhere. One of those visitors deserve a special mention, because he was a precious help to our missionaries at the beginning of their work, I refer to the eloquent Mr. Kirk, the late Dr. Kirk of Boston, then congregational pastor in Albany, whose rich and sympathetic voice could make itself understood in french, as well as in english. In order to find the necessary funds both to sustain the missionaries and to construct the building, he accompanied Madame Feller

in several cities of the United States, pleading the cause of this mission, and helping our missionary to form associations of ladies that would continue to aid her in this work where she had put her whole soul.

The day of the opening of this house has remained very vivid in the mind of several then new converts who are still living. On that occasion the hearts of Madame Feller and of Mr. Roussy were drowned in joy and gratitude at the sight of the cheering results already attained, and which to their mind were a presage of greater ones in the future now all glowing in their glorious hopes. About thirty French Canadian converts were present at this dedication service, and others were there as spectators who a few years later would be laborers in this mission. One may easily understand Madame Feller's feelings when she wrote about it: "I cannot express what I feel; only four years ago I came here alone and a stranger to occupy my little garret, where indeed I found the Lord to fill my soul with his blessings, but to-day it is in a large house that his presence and goodness completely fill." That house had only been opened a few months when one day a priest entered it with a timid and anxious look about him. What could bring him to this protestant house? Was he coming to convert them to his own church? Only after having become acquainted with him could the missionaries tell his motives in this visit. For many years he had been troubled with doubts about the truth of many of the teachings and practices of the Roman Catholic Church; in the perplexity of his mind, seeking light and finding none, he

had travelled in the United States, but understanding english imperfectly, he had learned but very little of what could bring light to his mind and peace to his troubled soul. Having heard of this Protestant French Mission, at all hazards he determined to visit it, and there he soon found light and comfort in words of real christian sympathy and love inspired by the truths of the eternal gospel. But to the missionaries it was a great surprise. A priest was coming to them to enquire after the truth, a member of that haughty priesthood so full of disdain for the missionaries and their adherents. What! so soon! They had assuredly prayed often and fervently for the conversion of some of the members of that numerous class, but they had not supposed that their prayers would be so soon answered. One may fancy with what feelings they welcomed him. They had the happiness of seeing him remain with them and soon become an invaluable worker in their Institute, as an instructor, and elsewhere in other capacities, as a preacher and as a writer.

Besides this remarkable conversion, and acquisition of a man accustomed to teaching, in a new school for which they had as yet no instructor provided, there was about that time a new impetus in the missionary success. The year 1841 appears to us as one of the most remarkable in the annals of this mission. That year was marked by the conversion of a man of note in the political world, and after Papineau one of the most prominent in the patriotic rebellion of 1837–38. Obliged to flee to the United States after the defeat of the patriots at Odelltown in the autumn of 1838, Dr. Côte

lived at Swanton, in the State of Vermont, and there practised as a physician. It was there that for the first time in his life he heard the gospel preached by an evangelical minister.

A short time after this our missionary Mr. Roussy, heard of Dr. Cote through a young French Canadian convert, and was invited to go and visit him. After a few days of intercourse, of reading of the scriptures and of prayer, the bright mind and the tender heart of the great patriot was completely won to the side of the gospel; and through hours of mental struggle and anguish of soul he was converted to Christ. The reader may well imagine the surprise, the joy of our missionaries at the knowledge of this conversion and the great hopes they founded on the influence of this powerful personality. After the member of the clergy, the political chief, the man skilled in parliamentary debates, accustomed to platform and stump speeches, ready to speak before noisy and tumultuous assemblies. Alert and vigorous, all these powers would be at the service of the most holy cause. Here was the instrument ready to work among the masses, while the other would be a man especially devoted to a life of quiet studies, of fruitful teaching to the young among the new converts, and to edifying preaching.

Doctor Côte brought to the propagation of his new convictions all the ardour and zeal of his political life, a little sobered down by a few years more on his head, and by the solemn sense that he had become a co-worker with God for the liberation of souls. In his incessant activity, interrupted

at times by fits of sickness, there was a far off intimation as it were that this powerful exuberance of life might not last a great while. Long before he could come back safely on Canadian soil, Dr. Côte had begun to preach with success in the United States. At Swanton he had gathered his old infidel associates to make them publicly acquainted with his recent convictions and his conversion by the gospel. From there he went from time to time to hold meetings at Chazy in the State of New York, where after a while he established a permanent place of worship. Occasionally he would make dangerous visits of evangelization in Canada, for there was a price set on his head. Having become free by the Act of Amnesty he came to settle at St. Pie where a remarkable work of reformation was begun by a New-Testament brought there from Grande Ligne. After a mighty work of evangelization which extended to the new settlements (clearings in the forest) of Roxton, Milton and Shefford, it was decided that the new convert should become the resident pastor at St. Pie. He was not to remain long there in quiet, for sickness forced him to seek for several months a warmer climate. He spent a winter in Florida. He had only just returned to resume his missionary work when the Baptist Home Mission Society requested him to leave it again to accompany Madame Feller on a long collecting tour in the United States. This chronic disease of the mission, the poverty of the Treasury, will often oblige the missionaries to leave their field of labor to seek the necessary means to sustain the other laborers and the primary schools as well as the Institutes, where we

educate our protestant youth, the children of the recent converts, and a few Roman Catholic children. Ordinarily it falls to the lot of those who have an abundance of money to travel in the country and abroad, but the missionary travels when he is too poor to remain at home. He may consider himself a happy being if in this arduous work he is not touched with that indescribable feeling of misery, which is akin to that of a bashful mendicant, keeping his pride low and his courage up, and is a worse trial to his soul that all the labor and fatigue which that occupation entails.

That first trip with Madame Feller in 1845 was prosperous enough as to money matters but the heart began to suffer because here and there it was refused the rich sympathy which it was accustomed to meet everywhere. The missionaries had always been baptists, that was well known among the friends of other denominations, but when it became evident that they could not be anything else, many of the old contributors kept back, not only their money contributions, but also their cordial sympathies. This was the more natural, in as much as since 1840 a Missionary Society, called "The French Canadian Missionary Society" had been formed in the interest of pedobaptist principles. What tearing down of the heart strings, especially for Madame Feller, as in her first trips with Dr. Kirk she had been so largely welcomed by christians of all denominations! Her correspondence at this time bears the painful traces of it. This crisis was not without influence on Madame Feller's precarious health afterwards; and of this she retained an habitual sad look

where one could see deep yearnings for a better state of things in christendom. In our old missionary it was the voice of conscience making itself heard above that of the heart. One cannot but deeply regret that our theological knowledge has not yet reached high enough to harmonize those two voices in the soul, in the individual christian and among christian churches.

Dr. Côte made a third collecting tour in the United States in 1848, after which it was decided that he would devote his whole time to the work of collecting. But apart from its being a most arduous task, keeping him away from his family most of the time, the strong desire to preach the gospel asserted its right in the heart of the preacher. With the consent of the Board of Directors he left St. Pie in 1849 to take charge of the station of Ste. Marie de Monnoir, a new field of evangelization where the gospel had penetrated in a remarkable manner by the conversion of a school teacher of singular intelligence and no ordinary piety. This nucleus furnished Dr. Cote with a very favorable position for successful labor. But as for him his work was suddenly interrupted by his death which occurred in September 1850, at the age of 42. His last hours were quite peaceful and full of the joyous certainty of a glorious immortality in Christ.

The missionaries as well as their supporters received the news of this death as a great shock. The Lord had already called into the field younger laborers whose conversion had not created such a sensation as that of the priest and of the politician, but who were to work a long time and with success

in this mission. In this memorable year, 1841, two young men of the village of Napierville, where Dr. Côte lived at the time of the rising of the patriots, received the gospel with great joy, and soon became members of the church at Grande-Ligne. They were already in the work when Dr. Côte died. After having spent some time at the Grande-Ligne Institute, they both went to Geneva for a theological course. Mr. Cyr returned from Europe in 1848, and Mr. Lafleur in 1850, only a few weeks before Dr. Côte's death. While at the Grande-Ligne Institute they made the acquaintonce of another young man recently converted from Romanism, Mr. T. Riendeau. In 1851 Mr. Charles Roux who had been a fellow-student in Geneva, came to join the missionary band. The four are still living and three of them belong to our missionary staff which continues this work. Mr. Cyr is a professor in Boston. Age begins to tell on them, they have grown grey or white in the harness, one slightly more than the others, but this sign of numerous winters has in no wise chilled his warm heart, or his zeal in the cause for which he has labored during forty years, and which he has helped to sustain by repeated collecting tours which his persevering toil has always made successful.

A short time after his arrival from Europe Mr. Lafleur accompanied Madame Feller in a long collecting tour in the United States in the autumn of 1850; and after their return in January, 1851, he was sent to St. Pie to take charge of that station, vacant since the death of Dr. Côte, and only visited from time to time by Mr. Roussy who had taken

charge of the post of St. Marie de Monnoir, where he did not spare himself in abundant labors. The work had sufficiently progressed to justify the mission in building a chapel which was dedicated in 1852. On the day of dedication the new place of worship was entirely filled by French Canadian converts, addressed by French Canadian pastors. What a difference and what progress since the dedication of the house at Grande-Ligne twelve years before! In the meantime, two other missionary houses, with chapels attached, wooden buildings, had been dedicated to the service of this work, at St. Pie, and Berea, in the Township of Milton.

The success in the field of St. Marie de Monnoir appeared of such importance to the dignitaries of the priesthood that they sent there the great champion of Temperance, Father Chiniquy, to oppose the movement by a series of polimical discourses against the new protestant converts. A public discussion between Mr. Chiniquy and Mr. Roussy resulted from it. This encounter created an immense uproar in the parish and it was noised abroad afar off.. It is probable that the apostle of Temperance and great opponent of protestantism who while a priest near Quebec and afterwards in Montreal had made several converts from protestantism to catholicism, had on this occasion breaches made in the defences of his faith that were never completely mended, and which contributed to make him a few years later a vigorous and aggressive protestant preacher.

When Mr. Lafleur took charge of the field of St. Pie, he found there a pretty fair congregation, a small church

organized, a large field of evangelization, and a modest school for young girls under the direction of Miss Jonte, a valiant worker who had already been engaged some ten years in this mission work. Madame Lafleur came to help her in the autumn of 1852, bringing to this incipient school of twenty girls all the distinction of her nature and superior education.

In the autumn of 1854 the Mission House of St. Pie was completely burned down, and the following autumn the girl's Institute was transferred to Longueuil, where the mission had purchased a large house which has been for more than twenty years the seat of a flourishing school. Mr. and Mrs. Lafleur had the first direction of it for several years, and during that time and afterwards, it was often visited by remarkable revivals.

At this stage of the history of the mission, Dr. Cramp, in his Memoir of Madame Feller, briefly reviews the work of twenty years. We shall enlarge a little in doing so. "The Grande Ligne Mission had begun its work with two laborers, it had now a dozen; after two years existence there were sixteen converts, now there are six hundred. It owns two Institutes, one at Grande Ligne the other at Longueuil. It has now organized churches at Grande Ligne, St. Marie, St. Pie, Roxton, besides missionary stations in Montreal, Sherrington, Henryville, in Milton Township, St. Gregoire, and several primary schools. Finally it gives help to the *Semeur Canadien*, a french organ of the press which for many years disseminated evangelical knowledge, and ably defended the truths of our reformed faith."

In that same year, 1854, four new parishes were opened to the gospel, especially by the labors of two colporteurs whose names and work deserve a mention in this historical sketch, because they have been among the great laborers in this mission. One bore the name of Eloi Roy, and the other Zéphirin Patenaude. Both were stalwart and strong, but resembled each other neither physically nor mentally, and still there was one thing in which they were alike, namely in their fitness for their work. Those to whom they presented the gospel were struck with the power of their argumentation, and seldom if ever got irritated with them. They had so much tact, they understood so well the religious ideas and even the superstitions of their own people, they knew how to present to them evangelical truth so as to disarm their prejudices and their hatred against protestants, that they often left friends where they had at first met adversaries or enemies. One of them with his fine open face, with easy and flowing language, pleased from the first. The other with an air of modesty that seemed ready to accept any kind of reasoning, even insults, harbored under an awkward appearance one of the most acute of minds which knew how to find the weak point, to dislocate a lame popular argument, to show the falsity of the specious reasoning of Roman Catholic controversy, and that in such a pleasant and alert way, that oftentimes the adversary would end by smiling on his defeat. Many a minister with much more acquired knowledge has learned from him the lesson of a keen and penetrating controversy. Many are those whom these two colporteurs

have brought to the knowledge of the gospel, and of whom they have begun the spiritual conversion.

Of the many conversions from romanism, and striking instances of their fidelity we have space to glance only at two instances. Mr. Boucher Bellville, formerly editor of a french political journal in Montreal, and for a time secretary to the Minister of public instruction for the Province of Quebec, was one of them. By his varied knowledge and his exemplary christian life he was for many years one of the great lights of our french protestantism. This distinguished man owed his adhesion to the gospel to the visits of the colporteur Eloi Roy. Mr. Boucher while a political prisoner in Montreal in the winter of 1837-8 had read the bible which zealous english protestants had put into his hands. He read it with a mind imbued with voltairian ideas, and one day was seen to throw it from one end of the room to the other, saying it was but a pack of legends. Our colporteur prevailed upon him to read it again quietly and carefully, especially the New Testament. He promised to do so, and at a subsequent visit the colporteur found his mind so much altered on the subject, and his heart so much engaged in religious thought that late in the night, and before retiring, he made bold to ask Mr. Boucher Bellville if he would kneel down in prayer with him. The aristocratic gentleman gracefully consented. From that moment, the work of grace progressed very rapidly in his soul, and in the course of the year Mr. Boucher was baptized by Mr. Roussy and joined the church at Grande Ligne.

The colporteur, Zéphirin Patenaude, was very modest, judicious about work, but his zeal to make known the truth was such that he oftentimes got himself into trouble by going too boldly in the face of opposition, accompanying anxious enquirers to the house of the priests, who all detested him. He was many a time maltreated, put in jail for a night, and once in a cold winter night had to stay out door all night, because no one would give him shelter. It was in a country parish, where houses are far apart, and where the priest had forbidden his people to receive bible colporteurs in their houses. Several years after this memorable night, our colporteur was going from house to house in the parish of St. D. It was on a cold bleak day of February, and as the day wore on he began to ask for shelter for the night, but met with a refusal at every door. As a last resort he directed his steps towards a lonely house some distance from the road, in the field; there he found four men smoking around a stove. He did not dare at first to ask lodging for the night, but only the permission to warm himself. That was granted, but in a few moments as if knowing his occupation they began to talk on the subject of religion, and presently asked him what his ideas were on this and that controverted point. His state of mind may easily be imagined. He was convinced that if he frankly expressed his opinion, he would be told to depart, and thus face another cold winter night out doors; and that if he hid the truth within himself, his concience would burn inside as hell fire. For a moment he lifted his soul to God to find strength to bear his testimony faithfully to the truth of the

gospel. He was surprised to find that his words were quietly received, without opposition, and after a while, he mustered courage enough to ask shelter for the night. One of the men said: I shall go home presently, you come with me and I shall give you lodging for the night. The man gave him supper, a good warm room, and next morning a good breakfast. On leaving the colporteur thanked him for his kind hospitality. Well, said the man, I must tell you why I have treated you so; it is a strange thing, but two weeks ago I was suddenly awaked at two o'clock in the night by a striking dream. I dreamed that a man knocked at my door, and on it being opened to him, he came in, drew a small book from a pocket, and as he opened that book the house was filled with light; it struck me so much that I could not sleep the rest of the night. When I saw you come in the other house I recognized you as the man I had seen in my dream, and of course I felt like befriending you, whilst I wish to know more of you. This fact has been confirmed to us from several trustworthy sources. We accepted it as a fact without attempting an explanation. But we readily admit it as a striking symbolism of our work in this country. Our purpose is to fill every Canadian home with the light of the gospel. This dear and devoted servant of God was the instrument, in God's hands, to bring the light and salvation set forth in the Gospel of Jesus Christ to hundreds of Canadian firesides.

Toward the end of this year Madame Feller's health became so poor that the physicians recommended for her a sojourn in a warmer climate, where she could be a great deal

in the open air, with complete rest. It is easier for doctors to prescribe rest and freedom from care, than to procure them by mere bodily rest, especially when for long years one has been the heart and the head of a missionary work which apart from other cares, rarely escapes that of money. Madame Feller was sorely tried by these during her sojourn in Florida. She came back from there, stopping a few weeks in Philadelphia, where intimate and generous friends always ministered to her comforts, and to the wants of the work to which she had given up her life. She was joined there by Mrs. Lafleur who was also now in feeble health. After a few days in New York they returned together to Grande-Ligne much benefited, but neither of them strong.

For several years past the need had been felt by the mission of having a legal position in the country. For this an act of incorporation must be had from the Canadian Parliament. It was obtained in 1855, under the name of: "The Evangelical Society of La Grande-Ligne." This act empowers the said Society to possess a certain limited amount of property, and transact business for purely educational purposes. Here is then a missionary organization equipped for solid educational work. It has schools and churches of canadian converts, several preaching stations, and a good staff of workers. In the nature of things it cannot but spread, and soon its adherents will be numbered by thousands.

This would be the natural result of this vantage ground were it not that two tendencies were already at work to diminish the appearance of those results. There are already

two different currents to draw away from us our converts, one toward English churches in our midst, favored by the fact that French Canadians easily learn the English language, and the other, much more considerable, is the emigration to the United States, where they now form a large number of French speaking churches, or where they individually pass into English speaking churches, losing not only their status as members of french churches, but also their nationality, and even their family names which are changed and travestied in all sorts of ways, occasionally exchanging one of the aristocratic names of New France for the most common place name in New England. Besides, a large number of those who had been partly evangelized, and had not joined us here, easily became Protestants on the other side of the line where neither family ties, nor priestly influence hinder the liberty of expressing their convictions. It has been said that there are more Irish in London than in Dublin, so we may safely affirm that there are more French Canadian Protestants in the United States than in Canada. Nevertheless the work commenced here by our mission continues and spreads from year to year, owing to the labors of other denominations which, while they limit the field of our operations, widen at the same time the general work of evangelization and of protestant education.

In 1857, Quebec, the strong citadel of Canada and of catholicism in Canada, closed until now to french evangelization, saw the gospel introduced within her walls after the mobbing of a french colporteur who had been so badly beaten

that he came to death's door from those injuries. On recovering he manifested a great desire to preach. In spite of his being very illiterate several persons encouraged him to do it. The baptist brethren of Quebec generously lent him their chapel. After a few Sundays when people came in good numbers to hear what this man had to say, and were somewhat amused at the way he said it, Messrs. Lafleur and Normandeau were invited to go and preach there for several sundays. Mr. Normandeau, a converted priest, and formerly a professor in the Quebec Seminary, was afterwards installed as pastor of a small church composed of some twenty members. He labored there ten years, during which time the little church gradually diminished by emigration, with very little prospect of making up for this loss by new additions from the ranks of romanism. There is still in Quebec a pretty good french congregation in connection with another denomination, a few members of which are of that first nucleus of 1858.

It was but a short time after a converted priest had been placed at the head of a french congregation in Quebec, when another priest also who was once a student in the seminary of that city, and who had become famous as a priest in the cause of temperance, began to show signs of resistance to the authority of the bishop of his diocese. He was then at Ste. Anne de Kankakee in Illinois, where he had been sent a few years before by the bishop of Montreal as a missionary priest for those regions. A letter he published in a Montreal paper led to a secret correspondence between him and Mr. Lafleur, who a few months later visited Mr. Chiniquy in his parish

of Ste. Anne. In the autumn of 1858, Mr. Lafleur solicited in Montreal and elsewhere the necessary funds to relieve the parish priest of Ste. Anne of his pecuniary embarrassments, which permitted him to attempt a reformation campaign in the the winter of 1858-9. It did not prove very successful, partly doubtless because the new convictions of the ex-priest as well as his plan of action were not sufficiently well defined. In the autumn of 1859, by the pressing invitation of Mr. Chiniquy, Mr. Lafleur visited Ste. Anne again, when he found that the work of protestant reformation had sufficiently progressed to allow him as a protestant minister to preach in Mr. Chiniquy's church, still nominally roman catholic, to an audience of from five to six hundred people. The eagerness with which they listened to the gospel was a touching spectacle to behold. Obliged to return soon on account of sickness in his family, Mr. Lafleur left Mr. Louis Auger who had accompanied him, to help Mr. Chiniquy in this important crisis when hundreds of persons were passing from catholicism to protestantism. The success of that movement and the deep religious feelings manifested in the beginning of that work of reformation were most admirable. That field is now chiefly under Presbyterian influence. This conversion produced a great sensation, and had its share of influence generally on our work here. The limits of this essay do not permit us to enter into the details of the various undertakings to which this remarkable movement led.

In the autumn of 1859, chiefly for reasons of health, Madame Feller and Madame Lafleur, accompanied by

Mr. Lafleur sailed from Quebec to Liverpool on their way to Switzerland. The latter left them there to go to Great Britain on a collecting tour for the mission. What happiness it gave them to see dear Lausanne again, with all its family associations and christian friends, all in the midst of such beautiful scenery! One may imagine Madame Feller's joy, after a separation of twenty-four years, to meet Mr. and Mrs. Olivier, and to be able to tell them of the progress of the work they had begun, progress through difficulties, sufferings and privations at times, and still most encouraging. In the midst of those legitimate joys our old missionary did not forget her dear Canada, where she had been the spiritual mother of so many children, and before long her heart began to yearn to return to the field of labor. She came back by Liverpool and New York in September 1860, accompanied by Miss Cuendet, an accomplished missionary lady from Switzerland, who devoted several years of her life to teaching in the Feller Institute at Longueuil, and left only because her health gave way. She has remained a loving and praying friend of the mission.

When Madame Feller reached New York she found that metropolis of commerce in a deplorable state of depression, of failures of large houses and banks in consequence of the beginning of civil war. The prospect of gathering funds for the mission was very poor indeed, and only through the love and devotedness of the ladies' associations of New York, Brooklyn and Philadelphia was she enabled to bring a few hundred dollars for the crying wants of the missionary work.

In the meantime that work was progressing, so encouragingly, that in a brief historical sketch of the mission published in London, while there, Mr. Lafleur could write the following items:—"The work of the Grande-Ligne mission now extends over some forty parishes, every one of which contains french canadian converts. Their number amounts to about 3000 converts, of whom 700 are in church fellowship. The mission comprises twenty stations, it employs some twenty laborers, eight ministers, six of whom are the fruits of the mission; others as evangelists, colporteurs and teachers."

Those figures surpassing the ones we could furnish to-day, will appear natural when we say that we had then several stations beyond the limits of the country, in the northern part of Vermont, of which one church alone numbered one hundred and forty-five members, one church in Quebec given up to another mission, and other fields, now occupied by other missionary agencies following up the same work.

Notwithstanding successful collections in Great Britain, on his return in 1861, Mr. Lafleur found the treasury of the mission empty and the work suffering for want of funds, partly owing to the fact that contributions received from the United States were in depreciated currency, on account of the war of secession, so that we were forced to borrow money repeatedly to prevent a complete collapse of our missionary enterprise. Mr. Lafleur returned to his old position at Longueuil, where he remained until 1864, when he was called to Montreal for evangelistic and pastoral work, retaining the pastorate of the

Feller Institute for several years. His first work was to gather the fragments of a little flock formed by Mr. Cyr while editing the *Semeur Canadien*. That work was for a long time very difficult, especially for want of a suitable place of worship, the congregation being obliged to move often from one place to another. For years Mr. Lafleur preached in one part of the city, and had the prayer meetings and sunday schools in his own house. He continued in this way fearing to add more expense to the impoverished treasury of the mission, which he was often times called upon to replenish by collecting tours in the United States.

Grateful mention must be made here of the timely help the mission received for several years from the American Baptist Home Mission Society which paid the salaries of some of our ordained missionaries. It enabled the mission to maintain several struggling churches, which became centres of evangelization and religious influence. The help from that society ranged from fifteen hundred to three thousand dollars annually. Our cordial thanks are here tendered to that great and beneficient institution.

The Feller Institute at Longueuil had been left to the direction of Miss Jonte for household management, and to Miss Cuendet for the studies. During those difficult years of work we had the happiness to chronicle cheering revivals at Longueuil among the pupils, and encouraging conversions in Montreal. Several times we had to ask our baptist brethren in the city the use of their baptistry, which they always granted with cordial liberality. But if the workers were valiant and

courageous,—if the Lord acknowledged their labors by numerous conversions, He left them in a state of poverty that one can bear for himself, but which hardly allows to do much for others. One winter we were obliged, partly for want of means, and partly on account of poor health in the missionary staff, to close one of our schools, that of Grande-Ligne, as no one could go on a collecting tour. It was at this dark hour that the Lord came to our help in a most gracious manner. One day Mr. Lafleur received word that five thousand dollars had just been sent by express for the mission from an old generous friend of the mission, Mrs. Caroline Street, of New Haven, Conn. At once the missionaries were called at Grande-Ligne for a day of thanksgiving. There were tears of joy among the missionaries on that day. It was not the first, nor was it the last time in the history of the mission that we experienced happy deliverance from the Lord at the hands of his children, but this was the largest sum we ever received at one time. A few years later Miss Jenny Bolles, of Hartford, sent us three thousand dollars which enabled us to pay all the arrears due to the laborers. Previous to that sums of one, two and even three thousand dollars had been received from personal friends of Madame Feller in Philadelphia. Habitually however we have only received from week to week and from year to year, through collections, subscriptions and small donations, what was absolutely necessary to continue the work.

In very sombre days, when Madame Feller's health was declining, new fields, full of promise for the success of evangelization, were opening before us at South Ely and in the

Township of Leslie by remarkable conversions. If there were shadows at the centre, there were luminous points at the circumference. Some of our Grande-Ligne students had just entered the pastoral work; our brother F. X. Smith at Ely, our youthful brother Therrien at St. Pie, brother Riendeau at Ste. Marie de Monnoir, brother J. N. Williams at Granby and neighborhood.

But the hour of one great mourning was at hand, in the beginning of the year 1868 we were to lose the founder of this mission, the one who had been from the first its daily inspiration, its wise counsellor, its most assiduous advocate at the throne of grace. She was very ill only a few days, her mind being all the time occupied about the salvation of the pupils in the house. She fell asleep in the Lord on the 29th of March at the age of 68 years. As in his memoir of Madame Feller Dr. Cramp has related at some length and touchingly the last days of that remarkable missionary, the services at her burial, and on the occasion of the erection of a monument to her memory by french canadian converts, this will be our excuse for not dwelling long on the sad events. Several of the missionaries were present and took part in those services, Mr. Normandeau presiding at the first, the funeral service. Prayer was offered by the Rev. Mr. Lewis of the Sabrevois Mission, and the Rev. John Alexander of Montreal. Mr. Lafleur said a few words in praise of her who had been the pioneer, the mother, the inspirer of that work; whose words of love and power reached the hearts of the french canadians, and whose pleadings before her christian sisters ever drew the

means to carry on and extend the mission's work. He showed how incessant was her labor of heart, and mind and hands, and how when incapacitated by sickness and confined to her room, that room still became the centre of all important matters, as at all times it seemed filled with an atmosphere of heavenly things, and spiritual communications. The funeral took place on Wednesday, the 1st of April. People flocked from all quarters to attend, roman catholics as well as protestants of all denominations. When Mr. Normandeau bade her adieu, the sound of weeping was heard over all the place. It was a soft, beautiful, warm day for our climate, and as we slowly wended our way to the cemetery, the birds were singing gayly over our heads bowed in sorrow. Everything around in nature spoke of spring, of renewed life, of power, of joy, of glory; and in our inmost soul, even under the cloud of bereavement, we felt the power of another and undying life, victorious over death that would soon reunite us to the departed ones who had preceded us in the sphere of immortality with the risen Saviour. In the month of September many gathered again in the Grande-Ligne burying ground, around the neat and elegant monument erected to the memory of Madame Feller, by the French Canadian converts. There were present most of the missionaries, several friends from Montreal, among whom Dr. Cramp of Acadia College, N. S. The venerable doctor briefly sketched the thirty year's history of the mission, recalled, vividly and feelingly the faith and courage of Madame Feller, and exhorted those present to follow her example, to sustain the mission

and to pray earnestly for the outpouring of the Holy Spirit upon its labors. The Rev. Mr. Roussy followed in a touching address, delivered under an emotion easily understood. T. M. Thomson, Esq. of Montreal, one of Madame Feller's oldest, most generous and steadfast friends and supporters, said a few touching words of her who had been the honored servant of God in this good work.

The work of the mission, though suffering in many ways by the great loss of this wonderfully gifted instrument, was not arrested, but in some respects slackened for a few years. By a stubborn determination to maintain its ground the missionaries determined that, if not progressing, they would at least keep it stationary. While making here and there a few proselytes, they were on the other hand losing as many members by emigration. For want of laborers for all the stations, and lack of means to call others in the field, we were obliged to abandon the Quebec station, in calling Mr. Normandeau to St Pie, where he was helped by Mr. Brouillet in evangelistic work. During the following years we had also to discontinue our work in the north of Vermont, whose stations passed under the care of the American Baptist Home Mission Society. Several of our old laborers left Canada to go and labor in the United States. These were Messrs. Cyr, Williams, and Rossier.

In 1869 Mr. and Mrs. Normandeau were called to Grande-Ligne to assume the superintendence of the Institute, Mr. Therrien was removed to St. Pie to take Mr. Normandeau's place, having at the same time the care of the field of Roxton,

whilst for the time being Mr. Brouillet was sent to take charge of St. Grégoire, Henryville and Pike River.

The year 1870 presents to us a prosperous aspect both as to receipts and openings for evangelization; there were also numerous conversions in different stations, Longueuil, Montreal and Leslie Township. The three following years brought several more changes in the *personnel* of the missionary band and also in different stations. Mr. Normandeau, from personal convictions not quite in accordance with the general tenor of the confession of faith of the mission, thought it his conscientious duty to withdraw from the service of the society, to the great regret of the missionaries and of many other friends. It was not however to withdraw from the work, for he continued in it remaining in friendly terms with his old associates. When Mr. and Mrs. Normandeau left Grande-Ligne, Mr. and Mrs. Brouillet came to take charge of the Grande-Ligne house, and after a time Mr. and Mrs. Rossier replaced them.

About that time Mr. Roux who also had left the mission work for several years, devoting most of that time teaching in a classical school, moved again by a strong desire to re-enter the missionary field, wrote to some members of our Board his wish to join us again. His propositions were accepted and Mr. and Mrs. Roux came to assume the direction of the girls school at Longueuil. During good many years associated with Miss Jonte, they saw a succession of fine classes of young girls, and young ladies many of whom were converted,

and now occupy good positions in the world, several of them teaching in ladies seminaries.

The four following years, up to 1878 were marked by other changes some of them quite painful. Mr. Therrien left St. Pie for Burlington, where he labored with success for several years in the French work. Mr. Rossier went back to Montgomery in the north of Vermont, where he labored under the patronage of another society. The Grande-Ligne Institute was another year without its habitual band of scholars. It was painful for the missionaries to visit that empty and almost silent house, with its cold corridors, to find there our old missionary almost alone, in failing health, and though apparently cheerful at first interview, nevertheless profoundly sad in his soul.

The field of Ely was at that time occupied by Mons. Jousse, who had lately come from France; Mr. T. Brouillet was stationed at Roxton Pond, having also St. Pie under his charge. He was called to be pastor of the church, was ordained a short time after, and since then has been blessed in his labors with most gratifying results. After several visits to the Township of Leslie, Mr. Pasche who had taught several years at Grande-Ligne and Longueuil was permanently settled at Leslie, where from long tendency to the views of the Plymouth brethren, he finally joined them and most of the little flock with him.

For many years past some of the Directors of the Grande-Ligne Mission were in favor of selling the building of the Feller Institute at Longueuil with a view to concentrate the

teaching department at Grande-Ligne, making it a mixed school, which to their mind would entail less expense under one management and the same staff of teachers. The existence of the missionary Institute in that great village of Longueuil, had wrought so little good outside of the school, notwithstanding the repeated revivals with which it was visited, and so few conversions among Roman Catholics in spite of the active evangelization by the missionaries, and their exemplary conduct, that the latter could leave it after twenty years of faithful testimony with a good conscience, if not without regret. There is however brightness in the remembrance of what was accomplished. Besides a few conversions from the outside, the many conversions among the pupils, the Feller Institute had one day the happiness of rescuing a nun, a young American woman who had been brought up as a protestant in New York, and then by going to school in the convent of the Sacred Heart, had been induced to become a catholic, and then to take the vows of a nun. Knowing of a French Protestant school in the village of Longueuil, she escaped from the convent and came to seek refuge under our roof. There with ecstacy she enjoyed her old protestant liberty, read her Bible anew, dropped the dark garments of the slavish faith into which her imagination had lured her, gave us the bunch of rosaries and crosses she wore, as relics of an abandoned superstition, and after a few days sojourn at Grande-Ligne she left with an old uncle, a retired Methodist minister who had come for her from New York. Trembling with emotion he said to us : "you are doing the work of angels. May God bless you more

and more." The young lady married a few years after and settled in Rhaway, N. J.

As a good opportunity presented itself of selling the property at Longueuil, the committee availed themselves of it with the purpose of building soon at Grande-Ligne. In the mean time the girl's school was transferred to Grande-Ligne under the direction of Mr. and Mrs. Roux. For the first winter they had a mixed school of forty-five pupils. It had been thought that the projected wing to the building could be built soon so as to accommodate a larger number of scholars, but that was accomplished only in 1880. Pending that date the missionaries did not neglect what they always considered their primal duty, namely to bring souls to Christ; so that as soon as among the pupils appeared signs of the work of the spirit, Mr Roussy being unwell and already suffering of the disease that was ere long to take him away from us, they asked Mr. Therrien, from Burlington, to come and spend some time at Grande Ligne and preach during the week. Mr. Lafleur also came from Montreal from time to time to help them. All had the happiness of witnessing a considerable number of conversions. In the course of the winter forty-three persons were converted, baptized and added to the church. Our old missionary Mr. Roussy, said on that occasion that since the beginning of the mission there had never been a revival of such intensity. The fact was reassuring for those who had fears that a mixed school was fraught with much danger.

A year elapsed in finding the way to begin building a

large wing to the old mission house. This solid and somewhat imposing structure was completed in the year 1880 and was dedicated on the 22nd of October. Mr. Roussy was still living, but already much enfeebled by sickness. It was a good and blessed holiday in which our old missionary joined us with all his soul. But like all our festivities here below it had a sad feature. It was with a faltering step and a very pale countenance which clearly predicted a near end, that he who was once so robust, came in the large lecture room to join us in the service of dedication. One building was up and the other was going down, a house made with hands and the other a marvellous structure, mysteriously raised to be the temple of the living God, now decaying, but to be raised again by the eternal spirit in a more aerial form for a more spiritual sphere. It is nevertheless sad to contemplate that ruin so long the sanctuary of the living God, and the vessel to carry salvation to others. Our brother fell asleep in the Lord in the month of November at the age of 68, the same age as that of our great missionary to whom he was as a devoted son, a fond admirer, and a zealous helper at all hours.

On the sad event Principal Roux wrote these words to the writer: My dear friend, it has come to the worst, in a moment, the robust and marvellous machine was stopped, the spirit motor had left it, nothing remained but the lifeless and disfigured form of a great son of God. On seeing him die I felt struck at the heart, and fainting I threw myself on a sofa near

by. I cannot possibly realize the truth that we will no longer meet him going from one room to another in this house.

Three days after a large number of friends from Montreal and St. Johns, and french canadian converts from all parts came to attend the funeral. There were also present great many Roman Catholics. It was a solemn and impressive service, in which several of the missionary ministers took part. The body was laid by the side of Madame Feller's grave. There repose the remains of the two pioneers of this work. They rest from their labors and their works do follow them, while their results remain among us as seeds of a glorious harvest.

A few weeks after Mr. Lafleur was asked by friends of the mission to preach in the First Baptist Church of Montreal a memorial discourse of Mr. Roussy, taking for his text Heb. xi. 4, and from which we make the following extracts: "Mr Roussy was but little personally known in the wide christian public interested in the work of the Grande-Ligne mission, but he was known everywhere among the French converts. During the first years of his labors in this country he was occasionally called to accompany Madame Feller in her visits to Montreal, and only once in the United States. But wherever he went he was naturally more or less overshadowed by the great individuality, who in his eyes could never be made too much of. Though he could read and write English readily, he never could bring his rebellious French tongue to pronounce it in such a way that it would appear English. He had withal retiring habits, and felt very uneasy

when anything like worldly etiquette seemed to be required. He had the natural politeness of the heart, *mansuétude* of the true French gentleman, and never did anything that savored of vulgarity. I venture to recall a tradition always kept up in Mons. Roussy's family, and which his distinguishe countenance, and his habitual demeanor would justify, it is that he was the direct descendant of Count de Roussy, who had to flee from the Province of Champagne during the persecution against the Huguenots, and founded the family of that name in Geneva. It was in the circle of intimate friends that his worth was known, where his loving heart gave out all its treasures, when his unselfishness was most conspicuous, and when his joy and happiness had all the naivety and buoyancy of childhood. Often have we thought of him as of the Apostle John, the loving and beloved disciple. Those amiable traits of character eminently fitted him for the work he had undertaken, and made him a centre of attraction wherever he was located. When Madame Feller was no longer there, Mr. Roussy remained as the loving representative of them both and of the work of the mission. His excellent memory, both of the mind and of the heart, fitted him to keep up those pleasant and profitable relations. Mr. Roussy was preeminently an evangelist. He was endowed with health, great physical strength, a warm heart, a vivid and large imagination, and great natural eloquence, coupled with comprehensive views of missionary enterprise. His patience and perseverance were simply unlimited. Bold and severe in his pulpit utterances against sin, vehement at times, he

was diffident when it came to personal pastoral conversation, his tender heart, his fear of hurting the feelings of others, rendered him habitually unfit for difficult duty which requires so much tact, self-denial and moral courage to perform.

Mr. Roussy's mind seemed to be always encircled with a halo of glorious hopes. We well remember his mapping out the whole of this Province (Quebec) in districts to be evangelized, just as if one had only to go and make the truth known for its being accepted. His great faith in the Sovereign grace of God led him to ignore man's resistance, which the divine Master recognized when he said, that some men made the counsel of God of none effect concerning them,—and these words full of tears, "and ye would not come unto me." It is true nevertheless that viewing deeply the magnitude of opposing forces, the inertia of humanity at large is apt to breed weakness of attempt. That weakness Mr. Roussy entirely ignored. To our mind the stronger servant of God is the one who measures the greatness of the opposing forces and who nevertheless undertakes the task, hearing in his soul the words of the Master: Be of good cheer, I have overcome the world.

With scanty resources, Mr. Roussy would still attempt great things relying on special providences to meet pressing emergencies. If the tokens were not forthcoming, it would never disturb his faith in the principle.

While faithfully preaching total depravity, Mr. Roussy had great confidence in human goodness. In all his reports of conversions one will almost invariably find that he qualifies

converts persons of good character. In a recent conversation with him on his youthful days, speaking of his early desire to instruct the ignorant, he said with a charming naivety: "I never was a bad boy." That we fully believe without attempting to reconcile the statement with his strong expressions on total depravity. Mr. Roussy was brought up a protestant by a deeply christian mother; spoke of his conversion when as yet quite young, and though it could certainly not be of the type of Saul's conversion, Mr. Roussy's strong and vivid imagination would nevertheless see other conversions in that striking contrast from darkness to light.

Mr. Roussy's mind was never called to pass through the ordeal of changing one form of faith for another, but only to seize on the more spiritual teaching of the doctrine he was taught from infancy. The Revival of 1820 which gave to France and Switzerland Empêtaz, Gaussen, Merle d'Aubigné, Malan, Bost, the Monods and many others, also inspired Mr. Roussy. His burning zeal led him to undertake a work of colportage in France which he pursued for two years.

While thus engaged, a theological school for evangelists and missionaries was formed at Lausanne. Our friend went there to prepare himself for missionary work. His theological studies were hurried and superficial, and soon to be broken up to accompany Madame Feller to Canada. During the first twenty years of this missionary enterprise, no new preaching station was established, no church organized, no school opened, no chapel built, that Mr. Roussy did not originate and foster. We have briefly alluded to his encounter at St. Marie de

Monnoir with the apostle of Temperance, Father Chiniquy. This conflict with the astute and eloquent priest abundantly shows how much progress the gospel must have made to call in such a champion to oppose it. On what side was the victory? On neither. Mr. Roussy had the great current of the gospel truth with a few partisans on his side, and Mr. Chiniquy had the great mass of the people all predisposed for him and which he retained by the adroit success of words of an able advocate who well knew how to strengthen the prejudices of the people against the new religion. Each of the combatants wrote a pamphlet to show that he had the best of the contest; and a great many persons were only more perplexed than before as to the real truth in the matter.

The last twenty years of his life have been spent at Grande-Ligne, as pastor, missionary, and religious teacher. He also gave a great deal of his time in acting as a homeopathic physician, and as such did not spare himself for both catholics and protestants. This place was to him sacred ground, and very beautiful, as Mount Zion was to the Israelites. This mission to which he had consecrated his life was the constant object of his thoughts and of his love. Nearly thirteen years before he had received a great shock in the death of Madame Feller who was to him and indeed to many others the personification of that mission.

Mr. Roussy came to this country a young man of prepossessing appearance, of gentle manners and lasting affections. He never married and never returned to his beautiful native land. Sometimes he would speak of returning home to feed

his eyes with that luxury of Swiss scenery which was his birthright and for which others pay so much; then his eye would sparkle, or on a suddenly pale cheek a tear would glisten and all was over; his soul had had a glimpse of the heavenly home, which nerved him to continue his work in his adopted country for God's sake.

He speaks to us by his life devotion to a work of habitual self denial. His life speaks to us of benignity, kindness, love ever abiding, patience, and sweet communion with God. His words of comfort, of kindness, will be remembered long in many a humble home; and his works of evangelization speak to us over a large area of this Province of Quebec. His written words are not many, and but very inadequately represent the power and the resources of his mind. The reason of it is in his want of early training to exact thought, sobriety of images and fitness of expression which did not readily come at the end of his pen. Only under high mental pressure did his mind seize on strong and exact language for his thoughts which were of no mean order.

One naturally looks to the close of such a life, as letting in something of the glory of hope which had filled the soul in some luminous hours; we crave for a Mount Nebo for those who have been favored with some scene of Transfiguration; but that is seldom granted; in fact it seems to be more the privilege of those disciples who during their lifetime were left to walk in the hazy atmosphere at the foot of the Mountain and who need more light at last to enter the dark passage. Our friend died quietly without manifestation of any great joy,

without any remarkable saying, but only to a friend who asked him if his trust was still in Christ, he simply answered, "What else could I do?"

He preceeded only a few months in the field of rest another missionary, Mademoiselle Sophie Jonte, who had consecrated forty years of her life to this work without remuneration. With her strong frame and good mind she was an incessant worker, in superintending household work or in teaching. She had an admirable talent as a house manager, with an astonishing economy which at times was something of a trial to those who were a little too dainty. That true sister of charity has proved that it is not necessary to be cloistered, nor to make vows of celibacy to live a holy life, and a life of devotedness to others. They are numerous those who retain of her a pleasant and grateful remembrance, and who still see that good face, recall her active life, the decided character, the human being that would get angry sometimes, but whose soul was so deeply pious, and whose conscience was so delicate, that one word, one look would stop the angry movement, and bring a tear of humiliation to tell it was all over. In a large frame, under a heavy envelope of bone and muscle dwelt a strong mind and a kind heart, easily moved to a good hearty laugh which shook the whole mass; and deeper emotions were just as easily provoked. No wonder she was loved by so many who came in contact with her. They are no longer there those great workers; others have entered in their work. With more facilities, with better appliances, will they do more and better! Will

they do as much, and as well? It will be for other historians to tell.

A new and spacious house had now been built at Grande-Ligne for the accommodation of pupils, still for the establishment and development of our work, two more buildings were needed; a church edifice in Montreal, and another at Grande-Ligne. A proverb says that everything arrives in time for him who knows how to wait. That it comes at last may be true, but in the best time, we are unwilling to admit. The building came rather late for the Montreal station. What long and weary years to wait! Finally after many difficulties, in being shifted from one place to another, all at once encouraged by the very generous co-operation of a few english and french brethren of Montreal and elsewhere, we succeeded in erecting a pretty and convenient place of worship which was dedicated in February. 1883. During that time, by the persevering work and the economical management of brother Brouillet, a neat and comfortable parsonage was built at Roxton Pond not far from the chapel. Both form a solid establishment, in a station where the work is progressing from year to year.

In the meantime several students of the Grande-Ligne Institute, having in view the work of the ministry, or of teaching in the school at Grande Ligne, were pursuing a complete course of study in McGill College. The first was Mr. J. C. Bracq, who after a classical course in Montreal, went for a theological course in Newton Theological Institution, Mass. Afterwards, Messrs. Parent and Massé, who both

completed their course with distinction in 1884. They are now stationed respectively, one, Mr. Parent, as pastor at Ste. Marie de Monnoir, and the other, Mr. Massé, at Grande-Ligne as teacher in the Institute. For the past two years and a half Messrs. Alfred Lebeau and Arthur St. James, after having gone from the Grande-Ligne Institute to spend a scholastic year in Woodstock Institute, then two winters in Montreal, following the french theological classes of Professor Coussirat, and occasionally preaching in some of the stations on sundays, are now employed on the missionary staff; Mr. St. James is pastor at Clarenceville, where he preaches in english and in french, and Mr. Lebeau is acting as evangelist in different parts of the field.

After a few years of missionary work among the french in Burlington, Mr. Therrien came back to the french work in Canada, where he began first in Montreal by replacing Mr. Lafleur during his absence in Europe in the interests of the mission in the winter of 1879-80. In the spring of 1880 he was called to the pastorate of the Church at Grande-Ligne. We are happy to say that his fears as to his ability to fill that post have not been justified, for he has done so to the entire satisfaction of his brethren, and with an evident blessing of God on his labors. During the winter that followed his installation there was a cheering revival among the pupils and in the congregation. His first care in assuming the duties of that position was to re-organize and raise up the church, which was in a rather poor condition owing to the long illness of the aged pastor, Mr. Roussy.

Another great task was looming before him, that was the urgent necessity of erecting a church building, a task he undertook with zeal, but also with a prudence that calculated beforehand the difficulties to meet. One of the most cheering results of that difficult enterprise is the large amount contributed by the church members, and other french canadian converts from Romanism. Our Grande-Ligne brethren took their time to raise their pretty and commodious edifice, which to our mind has but one defect that of being made of wood instead of stone. More expense was of course the main reason for this.

It was not given to our brother Mr. Roussy who years before, had given the ground to build upon, to see this temple with the eyes of the flesh. It would be pleasant to indulge the thought that from a higher sphere, in a more aerial form he was present at the dedication services. What a beautiful occasion for those who were present? What feelings of gratitude for the past, and what blessed hopes for the future of this work. On the platform of the pulpit were two converted priests, one converted forty-five years ago, the other quite recently, only a few months ago. The latter was to be the first candidate to be baptized in the baptistry of the new church, on the following Sunday.

Are these all the priests that have been converted in connection with this mission work? No, there is another of whom we have said but little. His name was Hubert Tétreau. He labored several years in the employ of this mission, but without much zeal, though with very decided protestant



FRENCH BAPTIST CHURCH,—L'ORATOIRE,

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ROUSSY MEMORIAL BAPTIST CHURCH,

GRANDE LIGNE, P.Q.

principles. His want of energy prevented him from becoming a very useful man, though he had a good mind, and was pretty well trained intellectually. He often wrote short, but sensible articles for our french protestant papers, and when called to preach would give a good discourse of fifteen or twenty minutes leaving the impression after the short service was over, that he had got rid of a duty which reminded him of the mass said in bygone days. He died a few years ago in Montreal, a member of the French Baptist Church.

From what has been said of the relations of Mr. Chiniquy with Mr. Lafleur, when the apostle of temperance began to entertain doubts about the scriptural apostolicity of the Roman Catholic Church, it would seem natural for this mission to claim Mr. Chiniquy as one of its converts; but this we have never done, as our missionaries may have been only one of many instrumentalities to enlighten the noted priest, and to help him out of his difficulties with the Roman hierarchy. After a year or two of apparant indecision between different denominations, wishing perhaps like Père Hyacinthe to join none of them, he finally cast his lot with the large and influential Presbyterian body. No one will ever accuse him of a want of energy and activity. His zeal is more unquestionable than his prudence, and as to his sincerity very few will be found to doubt it.

But why so small a number of conversions among the priesthood? A brief answer to this question seems here unavoidable. During Jesus Christ's lifetime on earth it was asked: "Have any of the rulers or the Pharisees believed

on him?" We answer, very few. Let us say at the outset, that neither in Canada, nor in France, nor indeed anywhere, that we know of, is it required that a man should have a special vocation for the christian ministry to enter the priesthood. He is supposed to be a Christian from infancy, and if he makes up his mind to renounce the joys of family life, while also shirking its onerous duties, after a course of study in a seminary he is ready to be received in the priesthood; that is to enter a generally comfortable position, especially in Canada. The priest becomes a member of a fictitious family, a brotherhood where the most insignificant of men, coming from the lowest rank of society, will be placed above society, and become a mediator between God and man. It is easy to conceive how such a position will of necessity feed the clerical pride, which in most men will prove a sufficient compensation for all other self-denial. It often happens that an ignorant and vulgar priest is called to receive at the confessional the most intimate secrets of men of the highest aristocracy, and of the most noble women.

Statistics have shown, much as statistics may seem difficult in such a matter, that among priests, one in ten take seriously the charge of their ministry, being more or less religious. It is useless to speak of the gospel to the nine others, they have, to their own minds, more important matters to attend to. As to the truth, if he ever comes in contact with evangelical protestants, whatever he may learn from them contrary to the teachings of his own church, he will dispose of in the attempt to reconcile, what is most spiritual

in that church with the gospel. Then he will cite with comfort to himself, men like Fénelon, Bossuet, Newman, Dollinger, as great christian individualities, good catholics and and learned men, whose resplendent exposition of the truth covers with its radiance all the defects of the doctrine and practices of their church. Think also of all the glory of that great church in which he has received his first religious impressions. That is why he will remain in the catholic church, the church of an infallible Pope, of the Jesuits, and full of superstitious teachings. The present position is too good, the prospect too magnificent to allow him to leave them. The religion in which priests have been morally nursed has not made them manly enough to face opposition, poverty and ridicule for the sake of the truth only dimly seen and apprehended. Besides, the confessional and its revelations have undermined their faith in the power of religious truth to regenerate humanity.

In the winter that followed the dedication of the church at Grande-Ligne, the Feller Institute was visited by the most remarkable Revival we have ever beheld in the missionary schools since the beginning of this work. There were hours when it seemed that the Divine Spirit was ruling all the life and thoughts of the inmates. Following that revival thirty-four persons, most of them pupils of the Institute were baptized after a clear profession of their faith in Christ. This happy band of fine youths have a great future before them to glorify God. This scene was the most magnificent and blessed consecration that this new temple could have.

We must now briefly recapitulate the results actually known of this work of fifty years, and indicate other results quite as real but known only in an approximate manner and are like the penombra of this focus of light and divine life.

During those fifty years of labor this mission has been the means of bringing about five thousand persons to the knowledge of the gospel and who are now scattered over Canada, and especially over that part of the United States called New England, but also many in the far West. Of this number about three thousand have passed several years in our Institutes and have gone to spread something of the knowledge of spiritual life they have received among us. In that space of time between three and four thousand have become church members. We are very far from having that number now, and that for many reasons. First, as we have already intimated, the extent of our missionary field has been limited by our having abandoned several far away stations such as Quebec, Leslie, and the north of Vermont, this owing in part to the fact that other missionary societies have since entered in this work of french evangelization with stations in those neighborhoods. All of those societies have come to existence in the wake of the Grande-Ligne mission, the pioneer that has furnished the proofs that French Canadians may be brought to evangelical christianity, in spite of what some english protestants had said to Madame Feller when she first [illegible] her work: "Madame Feller, you will never conver[illegible]rench canadian in your life." This clearly shows how difficult that work appeared in the eyes of our english brethren. "I fully

acknowledge my incapacity in this respect" replied Madame Feller, "but God who has sent me here will do it by the power of his word and spirit, and you will see it some day." We all see it to-day on a pretty large scale. We cheerfully acknowledge that once the proof given, even on a small scale, those brethren of another language and nationality helped this work generously, with the business like way which characterizes them, and zealously if not always judiciously.

Our labors have incited other denominations to form other missionary societies, with larger means than ours, at least one of them, employing more missionary agents, receiving in their schools a larger number of pupils, embracing in their colportage and evangelization a wider field, and spending twice or thrice the amount of our budget. But there are at least three points on which the old mission seems to us to have kept up an incontestable superiority. One is that the standard of education in its institutes has been of a higher grade; the second, is the fact of having had more frequent and more remarkable revivals; and the third, of having formed churches and centres more considerable and more essentially french in their nature.

There is another immense result of which few reports say anything, and of which nobody speaks, and which in the last great day, when everything shall come clearly to light, may prove of vast import. In our present complicated society, religious opinions, and still more religious lives, act and react on each other in a deep current which modifies the minds and the souls of men in spite of the differences of form. Thus

evangelical Protestantism, wherever it comes in contact with Romanism, modifies it largely and profoundly. It may not be acknowledged, but it is felt and shows the effect of its presence. The influence of our missionary work on Roman Catholics has been very deep and wide on thousands who have remained in the church where they were born, and to which they no longer belong by their inmost soul. They have thus been enlightened and spiritualized by our labors and influence. It is well known that the most pious and purest of Catholics live in Protestant countries. If all our missionary work had not produced more than this, it would not have been done in vain. But we have seen that it has accomplished much more. We have really labored for the whole north of this continent. While we have done this the Grande-Ligne Mission has retained a good footing in this neighborhood. There are in connection with this society six organized churches, each one having a church building either in stone, brick or wood; pretty, comfortable, or at least becoming, according to localities. They are at Montreal, Grande-Ligne, Ste. Marie, St. Pie, Roxton and South Ely; besides a solid establishment of education at Grande-Ligne, altogether forming seven centres from which radiate instruction, secular and religious, and evangelical light and influence. By the grace of God we shall maintain the light of divine life in those seven churches which are our seven golden candlesticks, and we shall often invite the Son of man to visit them either for inspiration, encouragement or reproof. We shall also ask for them tutelary angels, stars to enlighten

them and to lead them heavenward. They need not be of the first magnitude, but of those that will never be blotted out, but shine for ever and ever. The members of those churches have been during those fifty years recruited from almost every class of society, but especially among the middle class and among farmers. We have to-day members of our congregations that would be an honor for any church to have. We have but to continue to evangelize and impart instruction to those who have joined us, and in the near future we shall be a power in this country that will be no longer ignored.

We have a history of fifty years of labor, of struggles, of warfare with the adversary of all human liberties, with the inveterate enemy of the personal study for one's self of the gospel of Christ, because the knowledge of that gospel undermines his authority. From the time of the Great Reformation he accuses of pride whoever attempts to question that assumed authority, as if the man, or the society of men who arrogate to themselves the power to command other men, were themselves the only humble ones. We have also had to wrestle with the habitual poverty of our resources. To live in poverty like the Master while endeavoring to make others rich, is quite bearable; but to live in anxiety, under a load of debt in order to carry on a large missionary enterprise is to bear a burden that weakens power to work, one's legitimate influence, and makes the most blessed labor irksome. Few of the old missionaries would begin anew with the prospect that is now behind them.

Often by the ministry of his children, the Lord has brought us deliverance in a most striking manner, and that especially borne on the heart and in the hands of christian women who had thus showed they meant to continue the work begun by one of their noble sisters who had come from another country. Among many others, mention must be made of Mrs. Commodore Read of Philadelphia, Mrs. Brinsmade of Newark. N. J., Mrs. Caroline Street of New Haven, Conn., Miss Jenny Bolles of Hartford, who have given their thousands at one time. Mrs. R. I. Brown and Mrs. T. C. Doremus of New York, Mrs. Green of Providence, who not only have given themselves largely and repeatedly, but have caused others to give. And how many others who through the ladies associations have given repeatedly from year to year, the tens, fifties and hundreds. May those who still live to read this imperfect sketch, please to accept this meagre mention as a token of our deep and sincere gratitude. For those who have gone before to the better world they have a better reward.

I have reached the end of this summary retrospect of a work which the Lord has owned and blessed in spite of its imperfections, which has done good notwithstanding its poor, short-sighted and imperfect agents. May the blessing of God so rest on what has been done, that it shall be the seed to evangelize, instruct, and save multitudes that have not yet been reached.

THÉODORE LAFLEUR.

Evangelical Society of La Grande Ligne.

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I give and bequeath to the Evangelical Society of La Grand Ligne, Province of Quebec, Canada, the sum of..... to be appropriated to the benevolent use and purpose of said Society, under the direction of its Board of Directors.